

## Part 4, How to Improve Your Balance—National Institute on Aging

Every year, U.S. hospitals have 300,000 admissions for broken hips, and most are due to falling. Balance exercises can help you avoid a disability that could be permanent.

Strength and balance exercises are similar, because one exercise serves both purposes.

### Knee Flexion

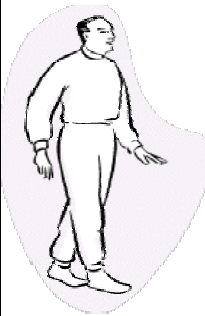
Do knee flexion as part of your regularly scheduled strength exercises. Hold table with one hand, then one fingertip, then no hands if you feel steady.

1. Stand straight; hold onto a table or chair for balance.
2. Slowly bend knee as far as possible, so foot lifts up behind you.
3. Hold for 1 second.
4. Slowly lower foot all the way back down. Pause.
5. Repeat with other leg.
6. Switch legs until you have done 8-15 repetitions with each leg.
7. Rest; then do another set of 8-15; switching legs.



## Anytime, Anywhere

### Walk Heel-to-Toe



This exercise can improve your balance. You can do it almost anytime, anywhere, and as often as you like, as long as you have something sturdy nearby to hold onto if you become unsteady.

Examples:

1. Walk heel-to-toe. Put your heel just in front of the toes of the opposite foot each time you take a step. Your heel and toes should touch or almost touch. (See Illustration.)
2. Stand on one foot (while waiting in line at the grocery store or at the bus stop, for example). Switch feet.
3. Stand up and sit down without using your hands.

### Safety

As always, talk to your doctor about exercises that you can do.

Don't do more than you can handle. Add these exercises slowly to your strengthening time.

If you are steady on your feet, progress to not holding on to a table or chair. Have someone stand close by if you are not steady.

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Did you know that a flood, fire, national disaster, or the loss of power from high winds, snow, or ice could jeopardize the safety of your food? Knowing how to determine if food is safe and how to keep food safe will help decrease the possible loss of food and reduce the risk of foodborne illness. This fact sheet will help you make the right decisions for keeping your family safe during an emergency.

## **ABCD's of Keeping Food Safe in an Emergency**

**A**lways keep meat, poultry, fish, and eggs refrigerated at or below 40 °F and frozen food at or below 0 °F. This may be difficult when the power is out. Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature. The refrigerator will keep food safely cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed. Obtain dry or block ice to keep your refrigerator as cold as possible if the power is going to be out for a prolonged period of time. Fifty pounds of dry ice should hold an 18-cubic foot full freezer for 2 days. Plan ahead and know where dry ice and block ice can be purchased.

**B**e prepared for an emergency by having items on hand that don't require refrigeration and can be eaten cold or heated on the outdoor grill. Shelf-stable food, boxed or canned milk, water, and canned goods should be part of a planned emergency food supply. Make sure you have ready-to-use baby formula for infants and pet food. Remember to use these items and replace them from time to time. Be sure to keep a hand-held can opener for an emergency.

**C**onsider what you can do ahead of time to store your food safely in an emergency. If you live in a location that could be affected by a flood, plan your food storage on shelves that will be safely out of the way of contaminated water. Coolers are a great help for keeping food cold if the power will be out for more than 4 hours—have a couple on hand along with frozen gel packs. When your freezer is not full, keep items close together—this helps the food stay cold longer.

**D**igital, dial, or instant-read food thermometers and appliance thermometers will help you know if the food is at safe temperatures. Keep appliance thermometers in the refrigerator and freezer at all times. When the power is out, an appliance thermometer will always indicate the temperature in the refrigerator and freezer no matter how long the power has been out. The refrigerator temperature should be 40 °F or below; the freezer, 0 °F or lower. If you're not sure a particular food is cold enough, take its temperature with a food thermometer.